

# Statement on Child Safeguarding

**Parish of St Paul's in the Church of England Diocese of St Albans**

## **Statement**

When children and young people come to our church family and join in with any of our groups or activities, this automatically places us as a church in a position of responsibility. Their parents/carers entrust them to our care and we must do all in our power to ensure that they are provided with a safe and secure environment, in every sense possible.

At St Paul's, we recognise and value children and young people as equal members of the body of Christ, and we undertake to:

- care for all children/young people and recognise that each is precious in God's sight
- actively promote their welfare in all that we do
- respect each child's uniqueness and seek to care for each one in a child/young person-centred way
- treat each child/young person with equal concern and opportunity
- observe good practice in our dealings with children/young people, keeping abreast with developments of 'best practice' and legislation.

## **The Policy in Practice**

### **The Selection and Appointment of Leaders and Helpers working with Children and Young People**

We recognise the need to take proper care in our selection and appointment of all leaders and helpers whether volunteers or paid. Appointments are made by the Vicar, or by someone delegated by him, including the Youth Minister and Children's Minister.

All those having unsupervised access to children / young people at least once a month are required to provide two references and be checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service where an 'Enhanced Disclosure' is obtained before an appointment is made. The Enhanced Disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record including current and spent convictions (i.e. those that happened some time ago and are defined as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act). In addition, details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the police national computer will be recorded, with the possible addition of information that is held locally by the police. For those regularly serving in our children's and youth groups we will provide a job description setting out their duties.

For those who do not have references and a DBS check because they help less than once a month and/or it is not considered that they will ever be unsupervised with children, there is an agreement with them and the other leaders who they are working under (who will have DBS checks) that they are not to be alone with a child under any circumstances, including supervising toilet trips and praying for a child. Following best practice guidelines, all leaders are advised to avoid situations where they are alone with a child wherever possible and work together to achieve this.

All leaders helping with a youth or children's group or activity are to wear the name badges provided for them. In the case of the children's ministry, leaders are also required to wear a team T-shirt. For our regular Sunday children's groups, each group is required to display the names (where possible with photos) of each leader for that morning on their door sign. All new families will be given a welcome letter that which will include the names and photos of the leaders in their child's groups. When new team members begin, parents will be informed via the St Paul's Parents and Carers monthly newsletter. This is to ensure that only the people we have approved are recognised and trusted within the children's groups.

### **Training and Support for Leaders and Helpers**

In order to support leaders and helpers, we undertake to provide appropriate training to update individuals as to their responsibilities and changes in legislation and recommended good practice. This training may take place 'on the job' or may involve attendance at national or locally run events where St Paul's will

contribute part or all the cost. All leaders will be given refresher training on child protection issues and best practice at the first leaders' meeting of the new academic year (normally in September). It is recognised that leaders and helpers have different levels of responsibility towards those in their care and this is reflected in the document 'Guidelines for Children's and Youth Leaders'.

## **Guidelines for Children's and Youth Leaders and Child Protection Advice Cards**

New leaders and helpers will receive a copy of this document upon appointment. It will also be included as an agenda item for the first meeting of Youth and Children's Leaders for the academic year. On appointment, leaders will also be given a 'Child Protection Advice Card' with a reminder of good practice and guidelines as to what they should do if a child begins disclosing something. During that first meeting of the academic year, replacement cards and guidelines booklets are offered to all leaders in case they have been lost or misplaced. Copies of both can also be found in the register for each group.

The guidelines will be reviewed annually and when there is any change in legislation or recommended good practice. The document sets out the aims and principles of work with children and young people and the responsibilities of those involved as well as the support provided by the church. It also includes guidance for leaders and helpers regarding the following: resources, administration, visits and off-site activities, staffing levels, insurance, discipline, first aid, fire procedures, health and safety, risk assessment, dealing with signs or disclosures of abuse.

## **Nominated Representative**

The Administrator is responsible for administering the system for checking of all helpers and leaders. He/she will maintain a register of all those checked and so approved to work with our children and young people. He/she will also maintain an up-to-date file of information regarding legislation and good practice so that he/she can advise the PCC of any changes that need to be acted upon. There is also a nominated person, not directly connected to children's or youth work, to contact should abuse be suspected or disclosed so that action can be taken if necessary. This is currently Judith Jackson.

## **Review**

This document will be reviewed annually by the PCC and when any significant changes in legislation or recommendations of good practice are advised.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>What</b>
2014 June	Anna Hawken (Children Minister)	Initial version
2015 June	Michael Reynolds (Youth Minister), Jenny McKnight (Children's Minister)	Reviewed; no significant updates
2016 June	Michael Reynolds (Youth Minister), Jenny McKnight (Children's Minister)	Reviewed; no significant updates
2017 June	Michael Reynolds (Youth Minister), Jenny McKnight (Children's Minister)	Reviewed; no significant updates
2018 June	Michael Reynolds (Youth Minister), Jenny McKnight (Children's Minister)	Reviewed; no significant updates